FDA Considers Overdose Antidote for Over-the-Counter Use

April 17, 2012

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is considering whether to allow non-prescription use of naloxone (Narcan), which can prevent opioid overdose from heroin or Vicodin, Time.com reports. Opioid-based substances can slowly stop a person's breathing. They cause about 15,000 lethal overdoses in the United States every year. However, if naloxone is administered during this slow cessation of breathing, it can block the receptors for opioid drugs, thereby reversing their effects and restoring normal breathing.

Many argue that naloxone administered by emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and hospital staff has saved thousands of lives, and that if this non-addictive, non-narcotic drug were more widely available for use without a prescription, more people would have the drug on hand and it could save lives.

The FDA's procedure for changing the status of the drug to non-prescription would require a pharmaceutical company to submit an application and to supply data showing evidence regarding the drug's safety. Alternatively, a citizens' petition could push the FDA to make the drug available without a prescription, but this procedure may take years.

To read the Time.com article, click here.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/naloxone-HIV-FDA-22253-6807